

Appendix C PLANNING SUBPLAN

1. Purpose

This appendix establishes the process to assure the production of high quality Civil Works planning documents and supplements the guidance provided in the basic South Pacific Division (CESPD) Quality Management Plan. This guidance establishes a framework of general policies and principles to achieve planning services and documents that meet or exceed customer requirements, and are consistent with Corps policies and regulations. The guidance includes:

Main Body of Appendix C	Quality Management of Planning Products
Enclosure 1	South Pacific Division Milestone Requirements

2. Applicability

2.1. This appendix applies to all activities of the CESPD Planning Division, the Directorate of Engineering and Technical Services, the Directorate of Programs Management and CESPD districts which are involved in the preparation, review or approval of planning documents.

2.2. The quality management process that is established in this appendix applies to all decision and implementation documents which are developed as a part of the CESPD planning program, including the following:

2.2.1. Reconnaissance Reports

2.2.2. Feasibility Reports

2.2.3. Post-Authorization Decision Documents, including General and Limited Reevaluation Reports

2.2.4. Major Rehabilitation Reports involving either authorization or new investment decisions.

2.2.5. Dredged Material Management Plans

2.2.6. Documents developed in support of the Section 1135, Section 204, and Section 206 Programs (except Plans and Specifications).

2.2.7. Documents developed in support of the Continuing Authorities Programs (except Plans and Specifications).

2.2.8. Documents developed in support of the Planning Assistance to States and Flood Plain Management Services Programs.

2.2.9. Master Plans

2.2.10. Financial Capability Analyses

2.2.11. Project Management Plans for the Feasibility Phase (referred to as the Project Study Plan or PSP in previous guidance).

2.2.12. Initial Appraisal Reports (Section 216)

2.2.13. Special Regional Studies

2.2.14. Planning Work For Others

2.3. The quality management process established in this appendix applies to all NEPA documents, including Environmental Impact Statements, Environmental Assessments and other related environmental documents, regardless of the program for which the documents are prepared. The quality control plans for all decision and implementation documents that are managed by other functional organizations and that are supported by environmental documentation shall include an independent technical review to ensure consistency between the environmental documentation and the decision and implementation documents.

2.4. Planning elements have significant input to other products, even though other functional organizations have the primary responsibility for the technical quality. The technical review processes for these products are described in the other appendices to the CESPD Quality Management Plan.

2.5. Reports, memorandums, legal opinions and other documents that are required to support the planning program, that are not an integral part of the Civil Works planning documents, and that are the responsibility of either Real Estate or Counsel, shall be reviewed and approved in accordance with the procedures and guidance provided by the Directorate of Real Estate, HQUSACE and the HQUSACE Chief Counsel.

3. References

3.1. ER 5-1-11, Program and Project Management, dated 27 February 1998

3.2. ER 1105-2-100 - Policy and Planning, Planning Guidance, dated 22 April 2000.

3.3. EC 1165-2-203 - Technical and Policy Compliance Review, dated 15 October 1996.

3.4. CECW-PE Memorandum, dated 26 March 1997, subject: Planning Guidance Letter 97-10, Shortening the Planning Process.

3.5. CESPD-ET-P Memorandum, dated 6 March 1997, subject: Draft Supplemental QA/QC Guidance for Section 1135, WRDA (as amended).

3.6. CESPD-ET-P Memorandum, dated 19 March 1999, subject: Expedited Reconnaissance Phase Studies.

3.7. CESPD-ET-P Memorandum, dated 30 April 1999, subject: Guidance for Post-Authorization Decision Documents.

3.8. CESPD-ET-P Memorandum, dated 30 March 2000, subject: Processing of Planning Reports in the South Pacific Division.

3.9. CESPD Regional Project Management Business Process, dated February 2000.

3.10. CESPD-DE Memorandum, dated 24 March 2000, subject: Establishment of District Support Teams.

4. Definitions

The definitions of terms used in this appendix are generally consistent with the definitions provided in the basic CESPD Quality Management Plan. Within the text of this appendix, certain definitions are expanded upon to place them in a context that is appropriate for the planning program. All definitions are consistent with Reference 3.2, which provides overall guidance for the planning program

5. Relationship of the Division and Districts

5.1. The CESPD Planning Division shall review and approve the planning portion of each district's quality management plan and shall provide oversight of the quality control processes, with the assistance of the District Support Teams, which are described below in Paragraph 6.3. The Planning Division is responsible for quality assurance for planning documents prepared by the districts. The Planning Division shall also perform policy compliance review for planning products that are approved at CESPD. This memorandum does not address the Planning Division's roles and responsibilities for the other CESPD functions of command and control, program management, and regional interface.

5.2. Districts are responsible for controlling quality for all work that they accomplish. To assist in the achievement of high quality, the districts shall develop, carry out and keep up to date their own quality management plans. The quality management plans shall establish district roles, responsibilities and processes consistent with this appendix. Districts shall also be responsible for the development and implementation of quality control plans for decision and implementation documents covered by this appendix.

6. Division Quality Assurance Responsibilities

6.1. Chief, Planning Division. At CESPD, the Chief, Planning Division is responsible for the following quality assurance activities:

6.1.1. Providing technical oversight of the district's planning activities.

6.1.2. Developing procedures and guidelines for accomplishing interdisciplinary planning studies.

6.1.3. Assuring quality of district technical review and policy compliance programs for all planning studies, reports and activities.

6.1.4. Approval of the planning portion of the district's quality management plan and oversight of the district planning chief's approval of quality control plans for planning products.

6.1.5. Providing technical and planning management support to the districts, as requested. Providing assistance to districts in resolving major technical issues.

6.1.6. Assuring current policies are implemented in district planning products. Facilitating resolution of policy issues with HQUSACE and others.

6.1.7. Chairing issue resolution conferences.

6.1.8. Certifying district final decision documents for public distribution, forwarding final decision documents to HQUSACE for policy review and processing, and providing oversight of the Washington-level review.

6.1.9. Certifying adequacy of environmental impact statements and other documents, which demonstrate CESPD compliance with environmental statutes.

6.1.10. Recommending Division Commander approval of planning activities that have been delegated to CESPD.

6.1.11. Monitoring customer satisfaction with district planning products.

6.1.12. Leading the planning portion of the command inspection program.

6.2. Planning Program Manager. Planning program managers are members of the CESPD Planning Division staff who are responsible for the various parts of the planning program. At CESPD, the planning program managers often serve three roles. The first role includes the responsibility for managing the quality assurance program for an assigned study or program. The second role includes the responsibility for the quality assurance oversight in specific technical areas. And, the third role is the participation on a District Support Team. While the list of responsibilities that follow are mostly associated with the first role, most of the responsibilities are also common to the other roles.

6.2.1. Providing informal consultation regarding technical and policy issues.

6.2.2. Managing the CESPD quality assurance activities for assigned studies and seeking quality assurance support as required from members of the District Support Teams and other technical specialists.

6.2.3. Participating in selected technical review strategy sessions at the start of major studies.

6.2.4. Participating in selected CESPD mandated milestone conferences and other significant meetings, and providing feedback to the district's planning function chiefs.

6.2.5. Facilitating the resolution of policy issues and major technical issues with HQUSACE and others.

6.2.6. Facilitating issue resolution conferences with the districts and facilitating the Reconnaissance Review Conferences (RRC), Feasibility Scoping Meetings (FSM), Feasibility Review Conferences (FRC) and Alternative Formulation Briefings (AFB) with HQUSACE. May chair these conferences in the absence of the Chief, Planning Division.

6.2.7. Managing and performing policy compliance review for activities that have been delegated to CESPD.

6.2.8. Assisting in local sponsor education.

6.2.9. Provide training, coaching, guidance for review of documents and related "mentoring" activities with district staff.

6.2.10. Approving planning products on behalf of the Division Commander and District Support Team for planning products that can be delegated to the District Support Team. Recommending approval of planning products that can not be delegated.

6.2.11. Managing the audit of selected planning products and the associated review documentation to assess the adequacy of the district's quality control program.

6.2.12. Managing and participating in workshops to address systemic issues and new procedures.

6.2.13. Managing process action teams to improve the planning process and the production of planning products.

6.2.14. Providing input to the command inspection program.

6.3. District Support Teams. District Support Teams were chartered by Reference 3.10 to support the districts in the execution of their programs. They are tasked to provide maximum support to the districts in delivering projects to its customers. In the context of quality management, this would include providing oversight and quality assurance of the district's overall quality management program, assisting the districts on project specific issues, performing policy reviews for delegated actions and processing district products through CESPD, HQUSACE and ASA (CW). The District Support Teams include members from Planning, Engineering, Construction-Operations, Real Estate and Counsel. The coordination among the members of the District Support Teams is described in Reference 3.8, for planning products.

7. District Quality Control Participants

7.1. Planning function chiefs, other function chiefs, the project manager, the study team, the review team and the review team leader all have significant roles and responsibilities in

achieving quality technical products. The roles and responsibilities of all the participating individuals shall be described in the district's quality management plan and shall include the responsibilities that are outlined in the independent technical review process which is described below in Paragraph 8.

7.2. Function Chiefs. The Chief, Planning Division in the Sacramento and Los Angeles Districts, the Chief, Planning Branch in the San Francisco District and the Chief, Planning and Project Management Branch in the Albuquerque District are the planning function chiefs. These planning function chiefs shall have the overall responsibility for the technical quality of planning products. Specific responsibilities of the planning function chiefs include the approval of quality control plans for planning products and the quality certification of planning products. The district chiefs of the Construction/Operations, Engineering and Real Estate Divisions, and the Deputy for Programs and Project Management, are also referred to as function chiefs. At the discretion of the planning function chief, chiefs of functional organizations such as economics, environmental resources and plan formulation may also be considered function chiefs for the processes set forth in this appendix. In accordance with Reference 3.1, the function chiefs are responsible for developing and maintaining a professional, technically competent workforce; establishing and maintaining the necessary systems, technical processes and environment to produce quality products; providing the technical oversight to assure production of quality products; and serving as principle members of the district corporate board. They are also responsible and accountable for the quality of the organization's technical products, assigning qualified members to project teams, keeping commitments made in management plans, and ensuring that their technical processes produce the desired results.

7.3. Project Manager. The project manager is the leader of the project delivery team. For the development of planning products, the project manager's role is to provide adequate time and resources to the independent technical review team for the review of planning products and adequate time and resources to the study team to respond to and resolve quality issues. Reference 3.9 describes the standard operating procedures for team establishment and the team processes. In accordance with these procedures, the project manager will negotiate the cost and schedule for members of both the study team and the independent technical review team with the appropriate section chiefs. To preserve the independence of the technical review, the project manager will not, however, be a member of the independent technical review team. To ensure that quality expectations are met in accordance with Reference 3.1, the project manager will ensure that certification requirements are met prior to approval by the District Commander or transmittal of a product to CESPD.

7.4. Review Team Members. Similar to the study teams, review teams shall be assigned representatives that have expertise in plan formulation, economics, environmental, hydrology and hydraulics or coastal engineering, civil design, geotechnical, real estate and other disciplines, as required. Since careful coordination between these disciplines is required, the review team must include senior staff with broad expertise. A goal will be the establishment of an informed, objective review team with full accountability to maintain objectivity. To ensure this objectivity, the members of the review teams must be independent from those who perform the work. Supervisors of study team members or, as indicated above, the project managers are not to be included on the review team. In addition, technical managers of contracts that provide

assumptions, clarify guidance or otherwise participate in the preparation of the products are not to be review team members. Review team members shall serve in a part time capacity and any one individual's review responsibilities shall not exceed 50% of their time. If sufficient staff is not available in a district, or if specialized review expertise is required, functional chiefs shall supplement the review team with personnel from other districts, divisions, headquarters, centers of expertise, laboratories, the local sponsor's organization or by contract. Project or study funds shall be used to pay for the cost of conducting technical reviews. A district in need of review assistance shall find the expertise needed and negotiate the schedule and cost for the required services. Functional members of the District Support Team may provide assistance in this effort. The formation of the review team should consider regional interests, resources, special expertise requirements and unusual complexity.

7.5. Regional Technical Specialists. The Engineer and Scientist Career Program Planning Board, in May 1997, directed that a strong career ladder for technical disciplines is essential to maintaining CESPD core competencies. With districts being fully responsible for the technical adequacy of products, the establishment of enhanced non-supervisory technical specialist positions at the district level is imperative and a division-wide advisory panel was established. Technical specialist positions are regional in nature, including the workload of the home district as well as the workload of the entire Division. A minimum of 30% of a regional technical specialist position is as a CESPD regional expert, which would include: serving as an independent technical reviewer for other districts, trouble shooting for other districts, or representing the entire Division at meetings and conferences. The other 70% of the position would be directed specifically at the home district's technical requirements. A listing of the technical specialist positions is included on the CESPD homepage.

7.6. Review Team Members for Water Control Management. Due to its special requirements, Water Control Management has been classified as a unique function of the Corps, as described in Appendix D, Engineering Subplan. Therefore, for planning products that either include modifications to water control management or otherwise may affect the operation of existing reservoir projects, the district will consult with the CESPD Water Control Center (WCC) staff to determine an appropriate water control review team member. The consultation will result in a water control review team member being selected from either: the CESPD Water Control Center staff, the local district producing the product, or another district. If a CESPD team member participates in the technical review of the product, that CESPD team member may not be involved in the quality assurance of that product.

8. District Independent Technical Review

8.1. Independent Technical Review Process. Quality control is the appropriate evaluation of technical products and processes to ensure that they meet customer requirements and are in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and sound technical practices of the disciplines involved. This is to be accomplished through a process of independent technical review. Quality assurance includes the oversight of the independent technical review process. The independent technical review process begins with a technical review strategy session, continues with seamless in-progress reviews and finishes with a comprehensive review of the final product.

8.2. Technical Review Strategy Session. The technical review strategy session shall form the basis for a quality control plan for all major studies. For feasibility studies and general reevaluation reports, this session will be held during the preparation of the project management plan for the feasibility phase. For other types of major products, this session shall be held early in the product development phase. The planning function chief shall chair the technical review strategy session. Also attending would be the project manager, other functional chiefs and representatives of the local cost-sharing sponsor. CESPD's planning program managers may also attend selected sessions, in a quality assurance role. In addition to establishing the independent review team, the participants shall establish the level of review, identify documents to be reviewed and identify policy or major technical issues that need to be brought to the attention of CESPD for resolution early in the study. This session should be combined with other initial formulation/scoping meetings. For products of an uncomplicated or routine nature, the technical review strategy session may be waived by the planning function chief.

8.3. Quality Control Plans. Quality control plans shall be prepared using information developed at the technical review strategy session. Specific quality control plans shall be prepared for complex planning products. A generic quality control plan shall be prepared for small or low risk products, such as reconnaissance studies and most products prepared for the Continuing Authorities Program (CAP). In developing the quality control plan, the districts are encouraged to rely heavily on their approved quality management plans, through reference, and highlight only exceptions. For major studies entering the feasibility phase, and for the initiation of post-authorization reevaluation studies, the quality control plan shall be fully integrated into the project management plan for the feasibility phase and will be certified by the planning function chief. All other quality control plans for planning products shall be approved by the planning function chief. A quality control plan, or a project management plan for the feasibility phase, shall, as a minimum, include the following:

8.3.1. A statement of the quality control plan objective.

8.3.2. A statement of the guidelines that will be followed for the technical review.

8.3.3. A roster of the proposed project study team or, in the case of a generic plan, a list from which the roster would be selected.

8.3.4. A roster of the proposed technical review team with the number of years and bullet description of relevant experience for each member. Similarly, in the case of a generic plan, a list from which the roster would be selected.

8.3.5. A list of documents to be reviewed by the technical review team.

8.3.6. A milestone list and schedule for review activities which integrate the mandated division milestones.

8.3.7. A discussion of proposed deviations from the approved quality management plan.

8.3.8. The cost estimate for conducting the independent technical review will be included either in the quality control plan, or in the project management plan for the feasibility phase.

8.4. Seamless Single Discipline Review. To maintain a seamless review concept, products of individual study team members shall, consistent with the scope and complexity of the products, receive technical review from review team members before they are released to other members of the study team or integrated into the overall study. A memorandum of record shall be the basis for establishing accountability for the quality of the product and the review. The review team member shall prepare the memorandum that shall become part of the review team's records. Specific issues raised in the review shall be documented in a comment, response, discussion, action required, action taken and, if appropriate, lessons learned format. Unresolved differences between the study and review team members shall be documented, along with the basis for the functional chief's decision on the issue. The Automated Review Management System (ARMS) may be used, at the option of the district. These reviews should be completed prior to major decision points in the planning process so that the technical results can be relied upon in setting the course for further study activities.

8.5. Product Review. The quality control plan shall identify products to be reviewed by the technical review team. The products would include: documentation for the major milestone conferences, documentation for mandatory issue resolution conferences, draft documents for public release and final documents. These products shall be essentially complete before review is undertaken and the branch and section chiefs shall be responsible for accuracy of the computations through design checks, supervisory review and other internal procedures, prior to the independent technical review.

8.5.1. Scope. The documents shall be reviewed using an interdisciplinary team approach. The document shall be reviewed for scope, adequate level of detail, compliance with guidelines and policy, consistency, accuracy, and comprehensiveness. The independent technical reviews will specifically address several areas of emphasis that are particularly important to planning products. The review shall ensure that the document tells a story that is a coherent whole, the steps of the analyses are consistent and follow logically, the assumptions are convincing and consistent, especially those related to the probable/most likely with and without project futures, and outstanding action items from the RRC, FSM, AFB, FRC, milestone conferences and other reviews are adequately addressed.

8.5.2. Integration of Prior Reviews. At the beginning of a document review, team members shall review their counterpart's presentations in the document. The review shall determine whether prior seamless review activities have produced the technical product envisioned during the seamless review. Material reviewed in the seamless review phase shall not be subjected to additional detailed review, except when the presentation in the documents is significantly different from the work previously reviewed or it is the judgement of the review team that the technical material may be causing the plan formulation process to produce unreasonable or inconsistent results.

8.5.3. Interdisciplinary Review. All members of the review team shall be expected to raise concerns in other functional areas. These concerns shall be addressed to the review team as a

whole. The review team shall then work through the appropriate review team counterparts to resolve technical issues. Review team meetings shall be open to representatives of CESPD for quality assurance purposes. It is the responsibility of the review team leader to seek resolution of disagreements among review team members before referring issues to the study team members.

8.5.4. Responses to and Resolution of Review Comments. The review team shall coordinate with the study team to resolve the issues that have been raised. Along with a description of the scope of the review, all review comments shall be documented in a comment, response, discussion, action required, action taken format and, when appropriate, lessons learned. In those cases where a functional chief decides unresolved disputes between the study team and the review team, the review documentation shall provide the basis for the functional chief's decision. The ARMS system may be used at the option of the district.

8.5.5. Final Documentation. Proper documentation is a key component of an effective independent technical review process. Significant decisions must be recorded and the entire process must leave a clear audit trail. The documentation of the independent technical review shall be included with the submission to CESPD. As an example, the review documentation for a final feasibility report will include memorandums from seamless single discipline review, memorandums from the milestone conferences and memorandums from the draft and final product reviews. The purpose of the review documentation is to show the full scope of the independent technical review and a summary of the review need not be prepared if action items are appropriately tracked.

8.5.6. District Certification. Documentation of the independent technical review shall be accompanied by a certification, indicating that the independent technical review process has been completed and that all technical issues have been resolved. This requirement is discussed further in Paragraph 15.

8.5.7. Certification of the Without-Project Hydrology. Because of the critical need to establish the without-project hydrology early in a flood control planning study, the chief of the district element that is responsible for the hydrological analysis will certify the hydrology prior to the first milestone conference in the feasibility phase. This certification will be included in the review documentation.

8.6. Dispute Resolution. The review team leader shall review the documentation to identify any outstanding disagreements between members of the study team and the review team. Any disagreements shall be brought to the attention of the appropriate functional chief to facilitate resolution of technical disagreements between study and review team counterparts. If a dispute is between representatives from different functional organizations, then the issue shall be forwarded to the planning function chief, who shall facilitate resolution. The appropriate functional chief shall make the final decision. The functional chief may consult with CESPD staff that can serve as an unbiased sounding board, or major technical issues may be forwarded to CESPD for resolution.

8.7. Policy Issue Resolution. Issues involving policy interpretation shall be brought to the attention of the planning function chief for resolution or referral to CESPD. In some cases, the planning function chief, may request CESPD to hold an issue resolution conference to resolve major policy issues. CESPD may also arrange for HQUSACE input or participation in the issue resolution conference.

8.8. Use of Checklists. Checklists may be used to guide the technical review and ensure that critical items are not overlooked. Checklists may be used to simplify the documentation of the review. Checklists may also be used to track outstanding action items for a particular study. The use of checklists shall not, however, eliminate the requirement to document specific comments. Checklists of items to consider during a review are included in Reference 3.3, Appendix B – Policy Compliance Review Considerations and in the Internal Control Review Checklist for Reference 3.2.

8.9. Lessons Learned. The development of a CESPD-wide lessons learned program is being led by the CESPD Engineering Division. In the interim, each district should take maximum advantage of lessons learned and share these lessons at appropriate workshops and conferences. The result of audits that have been conducted by CESPD to date, have identified a need to give special emphasis to the following items:

8.9.1. With and without project assumptions

8.9.2. Consistency with the process, terminology and other requirements of the Principles and Guidelines.

8.9.3. Cost Apportionment (who pays), especially when a locally preferred plan is proposed.

8.9.4. Commitments and unresolved issues in prior conference memorandums.

8.9.5. Consistency between the decision document and the EIS.

9. Quality Assurance Process

9.1. In addition to the oversight of the technical review process as indicated above, quality assurance by CESPD shall include the following:

9.2. Informal Consultation. The cornerstone of CESPD's role in quality assurance is to provide informal consultation regarding technical and policy issues with district and customer counterparts.

9.3. Approval of Quality Management Plans. CESPD shall review and approve each district's quality management plan.

9.4. Milestone Conferences. Milestone conferences shall serve as checkpoints to ensure that quality control has taken place and that appropriate progress is being made in the studies. The results of the independent technical review and the resolution of issues shall be presented by

the review team leader. The purpose of the presentation shall be to confirm that the district is following the quality control plan and evaluate any changes. Selected CESPD participation in these conferences shall be a significant element of CESPD's quality assurance program. This opportunity shall be used to ensure, for example, that the districts are making appropriate site visits, public participation has been adequate and that the local sponsor is satisfied with the progress of the study. A further discussion of milestone conferences is in Paragraph 11.

9.5. Issue Resolution Conferences. Three types of issue resolution conferences will be held. The first would be at the request of a district to obtain technical and policy assistance on major issues, usually on a particular project. The second would be held at the request of CESPD, to address major issues raised as a result of quality assurance activities. And, the third would be those mandatory issue resolution conferences that include the RRC, FSM and FRC, and upon the recommendation of CESPD, the AFB, all of which are attended by HQUSACE. The CESPD Planning Division shall chair all issue resolution conferences. A draft memorandum for each conference shall be developed during the conference and signed within fifteen working days. For a mandatory conference with HQUSACE participation, the Chief of Planning at HQUSACE shall sign the memorandum. The CESPD Chief, Planning Division will sign the memorandum for other conferences.

9.6. Audits of Sample Products. CESPD shall conduct detailed quality assurance reviews of selected planning documents and the independent technical review documentation, at the request of the districts. The districts are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities for assessing and improving their quality management processes. These reviews are for the purpose of identifying system problems, trends and possible improvements to the process, and assure compliance with current HQUSACE policy. Audits are available to the districts on a first come-first-served basis, with the exception that during each fiscal year, each district is to request at least one audit of either a feasibility report or a significant post-authorization decision document with an engineering appendix. The selection of studies for detailed review should be based on a number of criteria, including: the expressed needs and concerns of the district, new processes or techniques, or studies that have poor performance histories.

9.7. Annual Report to the District Commander. The command inspection program shall normally be used to ensure that all requirements in this appendix and the requirements reflected in each district's quality management plan are discussed with district personnel, and an assessment is presented to the district commander. When the focus of a particular command inspection is concentrated on other items, the assessment of the district's quality management program will be conducted as a separate, but similar initiative.

9.8. Training. The CESPD Planning Division has developed a catalog of presentations for planning training and will continue to add to this catalog. Members of the CESPD Planning Division staff are available to make presentations to the districts upon request. In addition, selected presentations are including on the Planning Division homepage, along with guidance and current activities.

9.9. Technical Workshops and Conferences. Because of the press of ongoing work, training, technology transfer, and the promotion of innovation often do not get the required attention.

These activities shall normally be accomplished through technical workshops and conferences. The most important of these is the South Pacific Division's annual planning workshop. Members of the planning community and those who work with the planning community, attend this workshop from the districts, CESPD, HQUSACE and often representatives from other divisions. The workshops provide an outstanding opportunity to present and address current planning issues and are an important part of the training program for all planners. Every opportunity to attend these workshops must be provided to members of the planning community.

9.10. Monitoring Technical Competency. Assuring that the team members who perform the work have the knowledge, skills and experience is an essential element of quality control and quality assurance. Quality assurance includes an evaluation of the district's development and maintenance of the technical competency for production and review, and assistance to enhance technical competency. Sharing technical capability between districts will be necessary to ensure that proper experts are available for technical review and CESPD may assist in facilitating these efforts. Distribution of division-wide resource allocations is a CESPD responsibility and the CESPD Planning Division shall be an active proponent for the district planning organizations.

9.11. Recognition Programs. The CESPD Planning Division shall manage those programs that recognize and promote outstanding achievement in the production of quality planning products and planning services. These programs include the annual Planning Excellence Award and Outstanding Planning Achievement Awards.

10. Expedited Reconnaissance Phase Studies

10.1. Guidance for expedited reconnaissance phase studies is provided in Reference 3.6. As directed in this guidance, each district shall prepare a generic quality control/study plan for the preparation of all expedited reconnaissance phase study products. The plan will include a sample schedule and sample distribution of costs that would be adapted for each specific reconnaissance study.

10.2. Within the first month after the initiation of an expedited reconnaissance study, the study team shall be formed from potential candidates that are listed in the generic quality control/study plan and the plan shall be adapted for the implementation of the specific study.

10.3. The further reliance on informed judgement emphasizes the need for even more experienced study team members. Periodic peer consultation, rather than review will be included, especially after initial field investigations, to broaden and test the conclusions reached from the limited data available. Individuals participating in peer consultation will be selected from the same approved list as the study team. These individuals shall be the most experienced in the planning process, with the ability to draw conclusions from limited data.

10.4. The products developed during the expedited reconnaissance phase include the project management plan for the feasibility phase and a Section 905(b) Analysis. These products shall be subject to supervisory review during staffing. Independent technical review of these

products shall be limited to a single recognized expert in planning procedures and the planning process. This individual shall be selected from a list that would, also, be included in the generic quality control/study plan. The independent technical review shall ensure that the documents reflect a coherent logic and that the assumptions and conclusions are convincing and consistent.

10.5. As indicated in Reference 3.6, a CESPD mandated milestone conference will be held to preview the reconnaissance findings and will be used to establish a corporate district-sponsor position relative to the direction for the feasibility phase. A description of this conference is included in Enclosure 1. The conference will normally involve all members of the study team who will participate in the identification of the process for competing outstanding items and resolving outstanding issues. CESPD's planning program manager and representatives of the proposed local cost-sharing sponsor will also be given the opportunity to attend. The independent document review will occur between this interim milestone conference and the completion of the Section 905(b) Analysis. The results of this review shall be included in a memorandum that shall be included with the planning function chief's certification, which shall be placed in the project files and be subject to audit. In accordance with Appendix H of Reference 3.2, the Section 905(b) Analysis will be submitted to HQUSACE via e-mail and no formal transmittal letter is necessary.

10.6. In addition to indicating that the independent technical review process has been completed and that all issues have been addressed, the planning chief's certification of the project management plan for the feasibility phase will indicate that proposed streamlining initiatives will result in a technically adequate product and that quality control plan requirements have adequately been incorporated into the project management plan for the feasibility phase. The certification will be bound with the plan. Certification requirements are discussed presented in Paragraph 15.

11. Feasibility Milestone Conferences

11.1. The quality management plan for each district shall include a milestone system that shall be employed as a performance measurement system for study teams and review teams working on planning products. Within the district milestone system, CESPD mandated milestone conferences shall be scheduled to occur at significant decision points in the study process. The requirements for the CESPD mandated milestone conferences are included in Enclosure 1. One of the functions of the milestone conferences shall be to recognize that key steps have been accomplished. Performance at each milestone shall be documented with a memorandum to be signed by the planning function chief. While the milestone requirements that follow are specific to feasibility reports, the districts shall establish appropriate internal milestones for other products in the quality control plans. At the initiation of the planning function chief, additional milestone conferences may be held.

11.2. Level of Participation. When HQUSACE takes advantage of the opportunity to participate in a CESPD mandated milestone conference, the conference will follow the guidance for other issue resolution conferences as indicated above in Paragraph 9.5. In those cases where the district requires a formal CESPD or higher headquarters position regarding study issues and a

meeting is the best vehicle for developing this position, a CESPD issue resolution conference may, also, be requested. Other milestone conferences will be chaired by the district planning functional chief, CESPD participation would be limited to informal consultation and oversight for quality assurance, and the conference memorandum will be signed by the district planning functional chief.

11.3. Technical Review Requirements. Technical review shall be broken down into manageable parts that correspond to the CESPD mandated milestone conferences. Therefore, documentation that is developed in support of conference discussions shall be reviewed by the technical review team and, to the degree practicable, issues should be resolved in advance of the conference. Since this quality control will have occurred prior to each milestone conference, the conference is free to address critical outstanding issues and set direction for the next step of the study, since a firm technical basis for making decisions will have already been established.

11.4. Submittal of Pre-conference Documentation. Unless alternative arrangements are made, the district shall submit to CESPD five copies of the same pre-conference documentation that is furnished to the independent review team, or provide this same pre-conference documentation electronically. Before the conference is held, the review documentation from the review team shall also be provided to all conference participants. A major goal of the process is to prepare the conference participants to make decisions regarding the future course of the study, which can be compromised if there are many outstanding technical issues. Towards this end, it is desirable for the technical review team and the study team to have resolved as many issues as possible prior to the conference. Because of time constraints, this activity may not be complete by the date of the conference. The review documentation that is provided to the conference participants should, to the degree possible, be annotated to indicate major issues that require discussion.

11.5. Areas of Special Emphasis. Each CESPD milestone conference that is held during the feasibility phase will include a review of the status of the project management plan for the feasibility phase to clarify any potential changes in cost and schedule. Any requirements established in the approval of the reconnaissance phase will be reviewed at each conference to ensure that specific study requirements established in the reconnaissance phase are addressed. Also, the transmittal letter for the documentation in support of an AFB will clearly outline all issues that should be addressed at the AFB.

11.6. Feasibility Scoping Meeting. Milestone conference requirements for studies undertaken through the expedited reconnaissance phase process are set forth in Reference 3.6. The first milestone conference in the feasibility phase has been expanded to incorporate the rescoping of the feasibility phase and HQUSACE participation is outlined in Reference 3.4. Preconference documentation must be provided to HQUSACE at least 35 days in advance of the conference. This documentation must clearly describe the assumptions and conclusions regarding the without project condition and provided a clear discussion of the formulation and screening of preliminary alternatives.

12. Post-Authorization Decision Documents

The development of post-authorization decision documents will follow the same process and milestone system as used for feasibility phase studies. If adequate information exists where one or more of the milestone conferences can be eliminated, then this will be clearly indicated an equivalent document to a Section 905(b) Analysis for the post-authorization review and coordinated with the CESPD planning program manager. The ultimate processing requirements for the post-authorization decision document will depend on the approval authority of the proposed changes to the authorized plan. These authorities are specified in Reference 3.7. Generally, for changes that are not significant, both technical and policy review will be accomplished at the district. Policy compliance review will be accomplished at the Division for a decision document recommending significant changes to a project if the Federal cost of the project is less than \$15,000,000. For a decision document recommending significant changes to a project where the Federal cost of the project is greater than \$15,000,000, CESPD will forward the documentation to HQUSACE for policy review. The purpose of the CESPD and HQUSACE policy reviews will be to ensure that the study objectives have been achieved at the appropriate level of detail of analysis and policy issues regarding eligibility and consistency have been resolved.

13. Engineering Appendices to Decision Documents

An engineering appendix is an essential part of a feasibility report or post-authorization decision document for a Civil Works project. Similar to other portions of the decision document, the technical review of the engineering appendix is a district responsibility. For decision documents that are approved by the district, the policy compliance review will also be a district responsibility. And, for any decision document that is not approved at the district, the policy compliance review of the engineering appendix has been delegated to CESPD. Either a printed copy or an electronic copy of the engineering appendix will be transmitted to CESPD with the draft decision document for policy compliance review. A printed copy of the engineering appendix will be included with the submission of the final report since the appendix will be published with the final decision document that supports authorization or the signing of a PCA.

14. Continuing Authorities

14.1. Quality Control. The quality control activities for the Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) and Section 1135 projects will follow the concepts established above. However, the districts are encouraged to be innovative within this guidance to exercise efficient use of limited funds. Except for complex projects (multi-faceted characteristics, subject to numerous policy determinations, unique technical problems or potentials for numerous requirements for deviations to the model Local Cost Sharing Agreement), the plan for technical review may be established in a generic quality control plan developed for the specific continuing authorities programs.

14.1.1. Standing operating procedures for Preliminary Restoration Plans and Initial Appraisals shall be developed by each district that will include supervisory review and oversight review by

the designated district CAP or Section 1135 Coordinators, prior to transmission to CESPD. These reviews will be oriented to meet the requirements established in Reference 3.5.

14.1.2. A generic quality control plan may either establish a standing team for the review of documents covered by the generic quality control plan, or present a roster of reviewers from which an individual review team would be selected. The generic quality control plan will also identify products to be reviewed, durations required for review and required meetings and conferences. The generic quality control plan shall address all products that are prepared for the specific continuing authorities program.

14.1.3. The generic quality control plan will be adapted for a particular study, or a separate quality control plan will be prepared for approval by the planning function chief, no later than 30 days after the initial work allowance for the decision document is received. Intermediate milestone conferences are encouraged and would be held at the option of the district. Review team members shall be included in discussions with the study team as the proposed project is framed and products are identified.

14.1.4. Documentation and certification of the district's independent technical review will be submitted with the draft and final decision documents, which will also allow CESPD to perform a quality assurance check of the independent technical review process. The District Commander will certify the final decision for all projects recommended by the District Commander.

14.2. Quality Assurance and Policy Compliance. Approval authority and policy compliance review for the CAP and the Section 1135 programs has been delegated to CESPD. For these studies and projects, CESPD has both the quality assurance responsibilities for technical quality, as well as the quality control responsibility for policy. CESPD must, therefore, conduct a policy compliance review of studies and projects submitted by districts for CESPD approval. The assigned planning program manager shall be responsible for the quality assurance and policy compliance review.

14.2.1. Issues that arise over appropriate level of detail should be elevated to the Division for early resolution.

14.2.2. At least two weeks prior to the proposed release of a draft feasibility report for public review, the report will be furnished to CESPD for an initial policy compliance review. This review will use the checklist that HQUSACE has developed for policy compliance review of other decision documents and that is included in Attachment 2 of Reference 3.3. Within ten working days, the District will be notified that they may release the report for public review, or that there are significant policy issues that may materially effect the conclusions and recommendations in the report, which would cause the report not to be released. CESPD will continue its review, concurrent with the public review of the report, concluding this effort within 30 days from the receipt of the documents.

15. Certification of Quality Control

15.1. Documentation of the independent technical review shall be accompanied by a certification, indicating that the independent technical review process has been completed and that all issues have been resolved. This requirement applies to all implementation and decision documents that will be approved by the district commander, approved by the district project review board, documents that will be forwarded to CESPD for approval and all documentation that will be forwarded by the division to HQUSACE for review or approval.

15.2. For the feasibility study process, the certification requirements apply to all Section 905(b) Analyses, project management plans for the feasibility phase, pre-conference documentation for issue resolution conferences and alternative formulation briefings and draft and final feasibility report submittals.

15.3. For decision documents that include a signed recommendation of the District Commander to the Division Commander, such as a final feasibility report, post authorization decision document (GRR) or final report under a CAP, the certification will follow the example that is included as Appendix H to the CESPD Quality Management Plan. This certification is to be signed by both the planning function chief and the district commander and will include the review documentation as an enclosure. Other submittals will be certified by the planning function chief and the certification may be included with the transmittal letter for the product and review documentation.

15.4. These certification responsibilities shall be specified in the District's quality management plan and cannot be delegated. Any certification requirements for significant modifications to a decision document that result from policy review, will be specified in the CESPD guidance that requires the modifications.

16. Process Deficiency Corrections

Significant deficiencies may be revealed in a planning product, after it has been certified at the district. If, on the off chance a planning product is produced that includes significant deficiencies, then the district will develop and implement a plan of corrective action to ensure that such deficiencies are not repeated. Progress on implementing the plan of action will be actively reported and monitored through the CESPD Executive Project Review Board process. This reporting requirement does not apply to any product that has been subject to an audit, as described in Paragraph 9.6.

ENCLOSURE 1

SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION MILESTONE REQUIREMENTS

1. RECONNAISSANCE PHASE

A CESPD mandated milestone conference will be held to preview the reconnaissance findings and will be used to establish a corporate district-sponsor position relative to the direction for the feasibility phase. The conference will normally involve all members of the study team who will participate in the identification of the process for competing outstanding items and resolving outstanding issues. CESPD's planning program manager and representatives of the proposed local cost-sharing sponsor will also be given the opportunity to attend.

2. FEASIBILITY PHASE

2.1. F3 Milestone Conference:

The district study team shall present the refinement of existing conditions, any new assumptions for the without project condition, results of additional public involvement, problems and opportunities, the identification of specific planning objectives and planning constraints, and the evaluation of the preliminary plans considered in the feasibility phase.

The technical review manager shall summarize the results of the technical review and the resolution of issues. These issues would normally involve the refinement of the without project conditions and the formulation, design and evaluation of with-project conditions for the preliminary plans.

The study cost-sharing sponsor shall summarize the views of the agency and identify any plans that the agency wishes to include in the final array of alternatives.

The project management plan for the feasibility phase will be reviewed and the conference will serve as the HQUSACE Feasibility Scoping Meeting (FMS) to address potential changes in the project management plan for the feasibility phase.

Any policy questions shall also be raised at the milestone conference and if these cannot be resolved, the CESPD planning program manager will raise them to the CESPD Chief, Planning Division or HQUSACE for resolution. Federal interest shall be reviewed.

This milestone conference shall mark the completion of an iteration of planning steps with the screening of preliminary plans and shall conclude with a consensus on the plans that will be considered in the final array of alternatives that will be considered in the final array of alternatives.

2.2. F4 Milestone Conference:

This conference shall mark the completion of the evaluations of the final array of plans and prepare for the alternative formulation briefing that will be held with HQUSACE.

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The study team shall present the evaluation of the final array of alternatives that will be presented in the feasibility study.

Again, the technical review manager shall summarize the results of the technical review and the resolution of issues. These issues would normally involve the formulation, design and detailed evaluation of the with-project conditions for the final array of plans.

The study cost-sharing sponsor shall summarize the views of the agency and identify any issues that must be resolved prior to the selection of a locally preferred plan.

Federal interest shall be reviewed.

This conference shall reach a consensus that the evaluations are adequate to select a locally preferred plan and the NED Plan. The conference shall also identify policy issues that will be of concern at the alternative formulation briefing (AFB) and develop a listing of the issues that shall be presented at the AFB. There will be no surprises at the AFB and CESPD shall actively support the district.